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THE *NOVELAS EJEMPLARES* OF CERVANTES IN GERMANY

In the publications which have appeared on the literary relations between Spain and Germany¹ Cervantes, perhaps, receives his share of consideration, but the wide space given to the discussion of *Don Quixote* leaves but little room for the appreciation of the *novelas ejemplares* and their influence on German literature. Nor is this want satisfied in Rausse's "Die ersten deutschen Übertragungen von Cervantes *Novelas ejemplares*," *Studien zur vergleichenden Literaturgeschichte*, ix, 385 ff., which, as the title indicates, merely aims to survey the earliest transmissions of the exemplary novels into Germany.

Cervantes, the author of the exemplary novels, is quite overshadowed in Germany, as elsewhere, by Cervantes, the immortal creator of *Don Quixote*. And yet the *novelas* are unanimously accorded a lasting place in the world's literature and extolled, with the tales of Boccaccio, as the models of all modern short story production.

Of the *novelas ejemplares* only one, *La Gitanilla de Madrid*, or *Preziosa*,² as it is generally called in the German version, enjoys a popular acquaintance among the Germans, and this distinction is perhaps due to the fact that it is supported by Weber's operatic composition. The other *novelas* are now comparatively unknown in Germany. All the more interesting is the information that the majority of them found their way into Germany at a very early date, were widely read and achieved a certain popularity.

In 1617, the year after Cervantes' death, two of the best *novelas* were translated into German, namely, *Rinconete y Cortadillo* and *El Curioso impertinente*. The former appeared in the same volume with the well-known picaresque novel, *Lazarillo de Tormes*. This

¹ Farinelli, *Spanien und die spanische Literatur im Lichte der deutschen Kritik und Poesie*, 1892. Schneider, *Spaniens Anteil an der deutschen Literatur des 16. und 17. Jahrhunderts*, 1898. Schwering, *Literarische Beziehung zwischen Spanien und Deutschland*, 1902.

² A complete history of this story is given by Wolfgang von Wurzbach, "Die Preziosa des Cervantes," *Studien zur vergleichenden Literaturgeschichte*, i, 391 ff.

work found a ready market, as may be inferred from the fact that no less than six editions were published in little more than a century, the new editions appearing in 1624, 1643, 1656, 1666 and 1724.³

Of the translator, Nikolaus Ulenhart, little is known but the name. He seems to have been quite free from the scruples of a borrower's conscience. He makes no mention of the source of his material, and shows no hesitation in taking liberties with the Spanish text. Not only does he transfer the scene from Andalusia to Bohemia, from Seville to Prague, but he gives the story an entirely different setting and even robs it of its Spanish character, so that we are not surprised to find the work mentioned by Gervinus as an original production of Ulenhart.⁴

In the names Isaak Winkelfelder and Jobst von der Schneid we may be able to detect their respective prototypes, Rinconete and Cortadillo, but one seeks in vain for any connection between the names Monipodio and Zuckerbastel, as Ulenhart chose to christen "the father of all rogues." Under this new name the master-rogue attained a wide reputation. His creation the "rogues' guild" is employed in other writings of the time, for example in Happel's *Der Akademische Roman* (1690), and Simplizissimus uses the expression "die Zunft des Zuckerbastels zu Prag," as though it were a well-known institution.

The German version of the story *Rinconete y Cortadillo* played an important part in the introduction and popularization of the *Schelmenroman* in Germany.

The second of the *novelas* to be introduced in this year, *El Curioso impertinente*, is an episode from *Don Quixote*, which Cervantes included in the first edition of his *novelas exemplares*. This translation, the author of which is unknown, represents accordingly the earliest beginnings of *Don Quixote* in German. The English comedians playing in Germany during the seventeenth century recognized the dramatic quality of this tale and recast it in the form of a tragedy, under the title *Tragödie vom unzeitigen Vorwitz*. This version appeared in 1630 in the second part of *The English Comedies and Tragedies*. A later dramatization of the

³ Rausse, *loc. cit.*

⁴ Gervinus, *Deutsche Dichtung*, III, 485.

story bearing the title *Der neugierige Ehemann* ⁵ was published in Sorau in 1744 and in Vienna in 1750.

In 1653 George Philipp Harsdörffer, member of the *Pegnitzschäfer* and author of the famous *Nürnbergischer Trichter*, published his work *Der grosse Schauplatz Lust- und Lehrreicher Geschichte*, in which he discloses a surprising acquaintance with the literatures of ancient and modern times. A man of wide reading, he borrowed his materials from the ancient classics, from the French, Italian and Spanish, but, extremely superficial in his methods, he plundered the treasures of foreign literatures merely for the sake of the stories. His interest in Cervantes seems to have been limited to the comedy content of his works.

In the following seven *novelas* of Cervantes, from which he has reproduced extracts in the above mentioned collection, we recognize the source of Harsdörffer's garbled adaptations, for which he saw fit to change the originals in form as well as content:

Cervantes	Harsdörffer
<i>El Licenciado Vidriera</i>	<i>Die Wahnsinnigen</i>
<i>El Casamiento Engañoso</i>	<i>Der Gegenbetrug</i>
<i>La Fuerza de la Sangre</i>	<i>Die Regung des Geblüts</i>
<i>La Señora Cornelia</i>	<i>Der Findling</i>
<i>El Celoso extremeño</i>	<i>Die betrogene Eifersucht</i>
<i>La Ilustre Fregona</i>	<i>Die edle Dienstmagd</i>
<i>La Gitanilla de Madrid</i>	<i>Die adelichen Comödianten</i>

In Harsdörffer's *Die adelichen Comödianten* we find the first introduction of Cervantes' *La Gitanilla de Madrid* into Germany, but in a form so distorted that it shows but slight resemblance to its source. We next meet the story in 1656 bearing the title *Tim Ritzchens verteutschte spanische Zigeunerin*, a translation from the Dutch of Jakob Cats. Of the translator Timotheus Ritsch nothing definite is known. In 1701 appeared the next German version of the same by one Araldo, who translated the story from the Italian of Barezzo Barezzi.

The story was first dramatized in 1777 by Heinrich Ferdinand Möller under the title *Die Zigeunerin*. This work was superseded by the romantic drama *Preziosa* of Pius Alexander Wolff, the first

⁵ The source is given in the sub-title, *Lustspiel aus dem Französischen von Allainval*.

version of which was completed in 1810. The second version appeared in 1821, and in this form, accompanied by the music of Weber, the *Preziosa* story continues to live on the German stage.

In 1752 Conradi published *Satyrische und lehrreiche Erzählungen von Cervantes*, which he had translated from the French. Not until 1779 was Germany provided with a complete translation of the *novelas exemplares*, on the basis of the original texts. This anonymous work became the forerunner of a long line of translations. The following are listed by Rausse: Soltau 1801, Förster 1825, J. F. Müller 1826, Duttonhofer 1840, Baumstark 1868, Keller und Notter 1883, Thorer 1907, some by Reclam, and other separate translations.

From the history of *Don Quixote*, which was more widely known than the *novelas* and exercised a much stronger influence, the following dates merit our attention in this connection. The first twenty-two chapters were translated by Pahsch Bastel von der Sohle in 1621. The first complete translation, poorly rendered from the French of Filleau de Saint-Martin, bears the date 1682. In 1696 a corrupt imitation of *Don Quixote* appeared in Nürnberg under the title *Der spanische Waghalsz*.

This array of dates and facts concerning the early history of Cervantes in Germany might well challenge comparison with the introduction of Shakespeare, who has since received a much more favorable consideration at the hands of the literary critics.

Over the various celebrations held during the past year in honor of the tercentenary of Shakespeare's death it seemed as though we had all but forgotten the fact that Cervantes too passed away just three hundred years ago.

Today Shakespeare is known to every schoolboy as the world's greatest dramatist, while the works of Cervantes, aside from his *Don Quixote*, are known only to the select few. And yet throughout the seventeenth century Cervantes occupied a much more important place in the German literary world than did Shakespeare. Like Cervantes the latter had been introduced into Germany during his lifetime. The English Comedians acquainted the Germans with much of his work. From them Jakob Ayer and Herzog Heinrich Julius von Braunschweig learned something of Shakespeare's art.

As late as 1682, however, the year in which the first complete translation of *Don Quixote* appeared, Morhof, who shows a keen ap-

preciation of the satire in Cervantes' novel, merely mentions Shakespeare by name in a list of English dramatists.⁶

Sixty years later, in 1740, Bodmer, whose wide literary interests are well-known, seems to have possessed but slight information concerning Shakespeare, referring to him as *Sasper* in his *Abhandlung von dem Wunderbaren in der Poesie*. For Cervantes, on the other hand, he expresses a high regard and offers in the following year (1741) the first German critical analysis of *Don Quixote*. It was not until this year, one hundred and twenty-four years after the introduction of the first *novelas* of Cervantes, that Borck published his translation of *Julius Caesar*, the first of Shakespeare's plays to be rendered into German.

It remained for Lessing, whose efforts in behalf of Shakespeare bore such far-reaching results, to call attention to the poetic significance of the *novelas exemplares*. Unfortunately his plan to translate them never materialized, else they might have enjoyed a more lasting interest and a more effective influence.

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THE RETAINED OBJECT

The third person singular of the Latin passive is often impersonal. You can say *cantatur*, it is sung, for *they sing*; or *bibitur*, it is drunk, for *they drink*; or *curritur*, it is run, for *they run*. In the *Æneid* (ix, 641) Apollo says to Iulus: *Sic itur ad astra*. For *Sic vivitur apud nos* you can say in German: *So lebt man bei uns*, or *So wird bei uns gelebt*.

It has been suggested that the third person singular of the Latin passive had originally an active meaning. Zimmer ("Über das italo-keltische Passivum und Deponens") pointed out thirty years ago in *Kuhn's Zeitschrift* (xxx, 224) that the corresponding Celtic forms were originally active, and could therefore be construed with the accusative; *m-berar*, I am carried, was originally *folk carry me*. Also in Oscan inscriptions we find this formation in *-r* construed with the accusative: for Lat. *ultima (imago) consecretur* you can

⁶ Morhof, *Unterricht von der deutschen Sprach*, 1682.